

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MUSCAT 00740 080937Z
ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 PM-03 DODE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00
ACDA-10 L-01 PRS-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 /047 W
-----081310Z 083957 /40

R 080634Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 713
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 0740

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR MU SA TC PBOR
SUBJECT: OMAN RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND UAE

REF: (A) JIDDA 2425, (B) ABU DHABI 0119, (C) MUSCAT 0736

1. EXCELLENT LOCAL SOURCE TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT MAIN PURPOSE OF SULTAN'S COMING TRIP TO RIYADH IS TO STATE HIS CASE REGARDING OMANI-SAUDI BORDER DIFFERENCES. IT WAS FURTHER CLAIMED THAT QABOOS ORIGINALLY WAS TO HAVE GONE TO RIYADH SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH SHAYKH ZAYID, WHICH WOULD HAVE MADE POSSIBLE THREE-SIDED EXCHANGE ON BORDERS, BUT THAT IDEA FELL THROUGH.

2. SAME SOURCE ALSO STATED THE DEPUTY DEFMIN SAYYID FAHER STRUCK OUT IN APRIL IN LATEST OF HIS FREQUENT FUND-SEEKING TRIPS TO ABU DHABI. ALLEGEDLY FAHER WENT FOR R.O. 40 MILLION (\$116 MILLION) THIS TIME, BUT RETURNED EMPTY-HANDED AND WITH NO PROMISES. (COMMENT: WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT IF ANY RELATIONSHIP MAY EXIST BETWEEN THIS FIGURE AND THE \$100 MILLION PROMISED TO OMAN FROM 1977 UAE FOREIGN AID FUNDS ACCORDING TO REF B.)

3. ON MAY 7 AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED OMANI-SAUDI ARABIA BORDER
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PAGE 02 MUSCAT 00740 080937Z

QUESTION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ZAWAWI. HE SAID THE SULTAN WOULD BE GOING TO RIYADH PREPARED TO PRESENT TO KING KHALID OR PRINCE FAHD HIS VIEWS ON THE BORDER. ZAWAWI SAID THAT QABOOS IS WILLING TO ENTERTAIN NOTION OF A SAUDI CORRIDOR TO THE SEA PROVIDED THIS IS APPROACHED AS A MATTER OF LEASE OF TERRITORY OR CERTAIN ACCESS RIGHTS AND NOT AS QUESTION OF CEDING LAND. ZAWAWI OFFERED NOTHING TO SHED LIGHT ON TWO

PARTIES' OPPOSING TERRITORIAL CLAIMS.

4. INCIDENTALLY, WE SUSPECT THE GOOD OLD "MAFIA" (YAHYA OMAR AND GHASSAN SHAKIR) ARE INVOLVED IN WEB OF PLANNING FOR QABOOS' VISIT TO RIYADH, AND PERHAPS CAIRO AND AMMAN AS WELL. THIS WOULD HELP ACCOUNT FOR THEIR AUDIENCE WITH SULTAN IN SALALAH APRIL 19.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BOUNDARY DETERMINATION, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 08-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MUSCAT00740
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770162-0051
Format: TEL
From: MUSCAT
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770581/aaaacruo.tel
Line Count: 70
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 96974698-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 77 JIDDA 2425, 77 ABU DHABI 119, 77 MUSCAT 736
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2605278
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OMAN RELATIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND UAE
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, MU, SA, TC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/96974698-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009